

Cairn Oil & Gas to convert Mangala pipeline to solar power by 2025

: 6/4/2022



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Cairn Oil & Gas, a unit of mining giant Vedanta Ltd, will convert a pipeline that ships crude oil from its prolific Rajasthan oilfields to Gujarat to solar power by 2025.

To commemorate World Environment Day on June 5, Cairn Oil & Gas will convert the Mangala pipeline to solar. It will install solar rooftop PVs in all the 36 Above Ground Installations (AGIs) along the pipeline by 2025, the firm said in a statement.

The Mangala pipeline is the world's longest continuously heated and insulated pipeline that runs from the oilfields of Rajasthan to refineries in Gujarat -- traversing 705 km.

Discovered in 2004, Cairn's Mangala oilfield in the Barmer district of Rajasthan was the largest global discovery of the year and India's largest onshore discovery in 25 years. The field is also home to the Mangala pipeline -- a technology marvel that was built to make the transportation of waxy crude produced from the prolific oilfield a thriving reality.

Now, this celebrated pipeline is making the solar switch. "In line with its decarbonisation commitment to reduce carbon footprint, Cairn is cutting dependence on more polluting sources of power and setting an important precedent in the industry," the statement said. "The goal is to shift the complete AGI load to solar energy and make our world's longest continuously heated and insulated hydrocarbon carrying pipeline a greener and more efficient resource."

Before this, the power for AGI operations in the midstream location in Gujarat was fully imported from the state electricity board and its predominantly coal-based power which comes with a much higher greenhouse gas emission intensity.

The firm has already installed a total of 13 AGIs with 15-kilowatt solar rooftop capacity to reduce about 270 tonnes of carbon dioxide emission per year. Further, the plan is to install solar on 10 AGIs each year to complete the project by 2025 and achieve a total reduction of 770 tonnes of carbon emissions per annum.

Discussing the company's initiative to adopt solar power for its celebrated pipeline, Prachur Sah, Deputy CEO, Cairn Oil & Gas, said, "The Mangala pipeline has been a great asset for Cairn Oil & Gas. Its unique technology has allowed the transportation of waxy crude from our Rajasthan fields to refineries in Gujarat."

Mangala pipeline, he said, has been a testimony of industry leading practices, and now its conversion to solar power is pioneering yet another first for the oil and gas industry. "We look forward to several more years of successful production from Barmer and the Mangala pipeline will be the backbone of sustaining our ambitions."

At COP 26 last year, Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced that India will achieve net-zero emissions by 2070.

In line with the country's ambitious goals, Cairn Oil & Gas has committed to achieve net-zero carbon by 2050.

"For this, the company has created a robust ESG road map with a slew of diverse initiatives - the first in the country's oil and gas sector to take this step. In fact, Cairn's decision to convert its much-celebrated Mangala pipeline into a fully solar-operated pipeline flows from this ESG vision," the statement added.

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